Attorneys Influence Expert Evidence in Forensic Psychological and Neuropsychological Cases

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Abstract

Converging lines of evidence suggest that attorneys are influencing data relied upon by psychological experts in forensic cases. This is a problem because a consequence of attorney prompting may be invalid expert opinions that mislead rather than inform the trier of fact. Attorneys influence psychological data by a variety of means. They advise their clients how to respond to psychological tests, make suggestions of what to tell examining psychologists and what to emphasize, and lead patients not to disclose certain information important to psychologists. The purpose of this article is to alert psychologists to a growing threat to the validity of psychological and neuropsychological evaluations in forensic matters. Several examples of attorney preparation of clients for examinations are described.

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